

**DRAFT MINUTES  
TOWN OF SWANTON  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Town Office Building  
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488  
In-Person & By Zoom  
Tuesday, October 3, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Earl Fournier-Chair, Ed White Sr-Vice Chair, Nicole Draper, Cody Hemenway, Steve Bourgeois-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant, Damon Broderick, Betsy Fournier, Jason Barney, David Winchester, Sophie Vibert, Ed Daniel, Vawn Edele, Peter Garceau

Zoom: Lin

A. Call to Order

Mr. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Fournier led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Fournier wanted to add to agenda a conversation about better communication in regards to Town owned properties.

Ms. Draper discussed the importance of proper management of these assets for maintenance and preventative management. The Town has spent a lot of money on building's the last few years and the importance of following up with these buildings. This will be added to the next Selectboard Meeting Agenda.

Mr. Bourgeois requested to add discussion about the points raised at Special Selectboard Meeting, the consolidation of Feasibility Study from Ballard and Associates with current Recreation Budget. This will show any overlap of costs.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) September 19, 2023 Regular Selectboard Meeting

b) September 26, 2023 Special Selectboard Meeting

**Ms. Draper made a motion to approve September 19, 2023 Regular Selectboard Meeting Minutes and September 26, 2023 Special Selectboard Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

2. Public Comments

3. Law Enforcement

a) Swanton Health Officer Report

Nothing to update for September.

- b) Swanton Police Chief Report  
No Police Chief Report.

- c) Swanton Animal Control Report for August, 2023

Review Mr. Benson's report for the Month of September. The report stated Mr. Benson attended to 7 Dog at Large calls. Ms. Draper stated there has been an increase of Dogs at Large in the area.

Mr. Bourgeois asked what is done when a dog is found? Mr. Savage stated the owner can be issued a ticket and that Mr. Benson usually takes them home until the owner is found or they can be housed at the Town Auxiliary Garage. The roadcrew then takes care of them until owner is found.

Mr. Fournier asked if they are repeat dogs? Mr. Savage stated by the addresses they are new.

Mr. Fournier asked about the unlicensed dog? Mr. Savage stated the owner should be given a warning to get the dog licensed, but that the other concern is if its unlicensed is it unvaccinated?

Mr. Benson still wants to meet with the board in regards to the ordinance.

Mr. Hemenway would like to see if Mr. Benson is giving warnings some kind of follow-up. Ms. Draper stated this could be a good opportunity for Mr. Benson to have a standard report to fill out that goes to board.

Ms. Cathy Fournier stated that Mr. Benson does come into the Town Clerks Office to follow-up to see if they came into register their animal if they have not, he goes to see them again. Usually, they come in within a couple days to take care of it.

#### 4. Old Town Business

- a) Discussion and award of Library Basement Drainage work

Mr. Savage reviewed the side by side of the two estimates. Mr. Savage will also check with Dean to see about drainage prior to the work starts but there will be time.

The comparisons did not show any difference in the quotes.

Ms. Draper stated that whichever company they choose there needs to be a plan to put back the cabinets and finish the walls to ensure the space is operational.

Mr. Savage suggested once this is done, they put out a RFP to fix the walls, take care of the floor and if qualified to put insulation in attic in regards to the blow test completed.

**Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to go with Northern Basements in the amount of \$11,244.16, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

**Mr. Bourgeois amended his motion to include authorizing Mr. Savage to sign the contract on behalf of the Town of Swanton, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

- b) Audit and Closeout of Leader Evaporator Grant

Mr. Savage updated the board he has had a Zoom call with Anne-Karlene Kroll whom oversees the grants.

Ms. Kroll as provided 6 immediate updates needed to current Policies:

- Accounting Auditing & Reporting Policy
- Balanced Budget
- Cash Receipts, Petty Cash, Returned Checks
- Fraud Prevention
- Fund Balance Reserve
- Purchasing

The Town currently has all of these policies in place, just need to be updated with the board.

Mr. Savage stated these are pretty straight forward and they have the VLCT guidelines to follow. This should take about 3 weeks. Mr. Savage will reach out to A.N. Piech the Towns accountant to follow up. The other requirements needed can be completed over the next couple years.

Once these are updated, this will allow the closing of this grant allowing the Town to proceed with Revolving Loan Fund.

- c) Meet with representatives of Cross Consulting to discuss Community Center Plans

This was discussed below.

- d) Discussion of points raised at Special Selectboard Meeting of 9/26/2023 Relative to Community Center, what are the next steps?

Mr. Fournier discussed the importance of making a decision for public record that the Selectboard supports New Community Recreation Center. The Selectboard approves the concept design.

**Mr. White made a motion that the Swanton Selectboard commits to building a new Community Recreation Center as proposed by the Recreation Commission up to 10,000 sq feet, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried. Ms. Draper abstained.**

Mr. Daniel spoke about the importance to taking care of our youth and providing a safe facility.

Mr. Fournier stated they are committed to this site but open to future opportunities elsewhere.

Mr. Fournier spoke of previous conversations with Champlin Housing Trust and Abenaki leaders for future needs in Swanton.

Mr. Fournier would like to have someone whom coordinates all of the information with the Recreation Commission and The Town so everyone stays up to date. A lot of good questions were raised at the Special Selectboard Meeting.

**Mr. Fournier stated it needs to be on record that the board is committed to doing as much as they can with this project, in hopes that this will attract some interest from private parties.**

Mr. Fournier wants to have the Town & Recreation Commission work together but that there needs to be contact people.

Mr. Fournier's suggestion is that Mr. Savage be the contact for the Town that will keep the board updated. Mr. Fournier suggested Ms. Draper be the Recreation Contact, Mr. Bourgeois stated he thinks it's a conflict of interest with Ms. Draper being on the Selectboard, he thinks she would do a good job but can't be wearing two hats.

Ms. Betsy Fournier stated she can be the contact for the Recreation Commission.

Mr. Fournier stated the importance of everyone knowing what's going on. The last meeting the Ms. Betsy Fournier was not prepared to discuss the Engineers report about the use of Blake St. vs Jewett St. but she had not been able to connect with Mr. Fournier due to him being out of town.

Mr. Fournier wants to use Blake St. as the entrance and believes Shelburne Limestone may partner with this project with moving the traffic off Jewett St. Can the benefit be worth the added expense of using Blake St.

Mr. Savage & Ms. Betsy Fournier will be the point people going forward. Mr. Savage reports to Selectboard, Ms. Betsy Fournier reports to Recreation Commission and the Selectboard.

Mr. Bourgeois suggested Mr. Savage and Ms. Betsy Fournier divide up the points brought up at the Special Selectboard Meeting and report back to the Selectboard in 60 days with answers for the communities' questions.

Mr. Fournier wanted to know about a Grant List. Ms. Betsy Fournier stated a lot of the grants they will see will be very competitive, having a someone that lead and write them will be important.

Ms. Betsy Fournier & Mr. Savage will put together a RFP for a Grant Writer.

Mr. Bourgeois stated any grants applied for should be approved by the Selectboard first. This will be a requirement as the grants will likely be done under Town of Swanton. This is a Town owned building.

Mr. Vawn Edele joined the discussion as the architect and Mr. Peter Garceau as the engineer from Cross Consulting Engineer.

Mr. Fournier asked about parking for the facility. Mr. Edele stated parking will be hard to determine if the lot is not paved people will park anywhere.

Mr. Fournier said he'd like to know on a paved parking lot how many spots will they get. Ms. Betsy Fournier stated before they can determine that a design and location on the lot needs to be determined.

Blake St or Jewett St. will determine the building size and will affect the parking. Mr. Garceau stated they need to decide the location and what kind of site design they want. Then they can do an actual site design that will help them know where to put storm water, then they can figure out parking. He can give a rough idea but until actual design is agreed on it will be an estimate. Unless the town wants to pay for each design.

Mr. Bourgeois asked Mr. Garceau if this will require an Act 250 permit? Mr.

Garceau stated he doesn't think so, usually Towns are exempt but he will find out.

Mr. Fournier asked about wetlands, for different uses can they use more of the land? Buildings vs. fields? Mr. Garceau stated no. Very slim chance of mitigating the wetlands. They are there to be protected.

Ms. Besty Fournier stated Cross Consulting has two building concepts they have given to everyone. More designs cost more money keep in mind. Mr. Fournier stated these designs don't show parking.

Ms. Besty Fournier stated Mr. Joel Clark took back the Selectboards request to use Blake St. as entrance and they have the two building concepts, the original and the Blake St. entrance.

The Blake St. entrance does come with a much larger cost due to curve and slope. The lot is 10' below the road.

Mr. Garceau stated if the Selectboard authorizes them to continue the next step is design.

Mr. Hemenway asked what people do for parking now for large events? Ms.

Betsy Fournier stated people park, she believes people on Jewett St. have experienced this traffic and parking and are used to it. Ms. Besty Fournier stated she believes if they use Jewett St., they need to consider a pedestrian route.

Ms. Draper stated there is room on Blake St. to have a pedestrian path.

Mr. Bourgeois recommended they continue with the two concepts and see where it goes, other plans like waste water, storm water plans.

Mr. Garceau stated to be clear Blake St. cannot be used just that they are losing so much space and the land and adding substantial cost to go that route.

Mr. Bourgeois asked how much cost? Mr. Garceau wasn't sure but your adding retaining walls, loose the field, loose parking he'd estimate couple hundred thousand dollars more.

Mr. Bourgeois stated when you're looking at 3.5 million, \$150,000 isn't that big of a number. Ms. Winchester stated its still cheaper than starting from scratch on another property.

Ms. Besty Fournier asked to clarify exactly what the board is asking for design before Cross Consulting moves forward.

The next step is preliminary design.

Mr. Fournier stated he'd like to see the Jewett St. single story concept and Blake St. as two-story building proposals. Ms. Draper clarified Mr. Fournier is looking for egress on Blake St.? Yes, Jewett St. would only be emergency exit Mr. Fournier stated.

The two-story option would make the building visible from the street.

Ms. Draper clarified what Mr. Fournier is asking for, the original concept with building entrance of Jewett St., the second he would like to see two-story Blake St. entrance.

Mr. Garceau shared a concept on paper of the second building option discussed, two-story.

Mr. Bourgeois suggested Mr. Garceau give them the cost to move forward with the two concepts, as paying for both the one will not be used. Designing both projects is not cost effective to town. Mr. Garceau can provide the cost amounts for two artist renderings before the next Selectboard Meeting.

This will be reviewed at another meeting.

Mr. Garceau will get the cost estimates to Mr. Savage prior to the meeting for everyone to review.

Mr. Garceau will send a summary of action for them to review also.

Mr. Bourgeois would like to have a third party take the numbers from the Feasibility Study and the Recreation Budget together and see if there is overlap in cost, therefore cost savings. The Feasibility study did not include current costs or budget. This was just based on the new facility.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if they ever see the Recreation budget throughout the year to see how they spend their money? No. Ms. Cathy Fournier stated that once the voters approve those funds, they are given to the Recreation Commission, it's the same for the library, rescue or fire dept. Ms. Betsy Fournier stated they are audited just like the town by external auditors.

#### 5. New Town Business

##### A) Report on items discussed with Chief Crawford of the Abenaki Tribal Council

Mr. Bourgeois & Mr. Fournier met with Chief Crawford and discussed the possibility of joint funding opportunities. Ms. Draper stated they currently partner with Abenaki partners just like they do the library.

Mr. Fournier stated Abenaki leaders would be interested in doing more with the community if they had the space to do it.

Mr. Savage stated he had received an invitation for Friday 10/6 Sen. Peter Welch will be in town and tour the Abenaki Tribal Council. Mr. Savage is unable to attend, but he will let the board know so they can attend.

#### 6. Community and Economic Development

Mr. Savage has a meeting schedule for Wednesday with someone interested in starting a new business in Swanton Village.

#### 7. Highway Department

##### A) Meeting on October 4, 2023, with Swanton Village PWD at Brooklyn St. to stormwater drain solution

Mr. Savage has a meeting Wednesday and will update the board at the next meeting. Swanton Village plans to pay for their portion out of Grant and Aids Program, Swanton Town can pay their portion with next years Grant and Aids Program.

They may need a culvert to move the water. Currently there is a storm drain between two houses that needs to be addressed.

##### B) Mr. White updated the board the Swanton Village & Swanton Town Road crew members have fixed the culvert on Maple Grove.

Mr. Fournier stated they should be able to continue mowing as the tractor is fixed.

8. Any Other Necessary Business  
None

9.. Public Comment (Reprise)  
None

10, Upcoming Events

a) Planning Commission – Wednesday – Oct. 11, 2023 – 6:30 pm Town Offices

b) Selectboard Meeting – Tuesday – Oct. 17, 2023 – 6:00 pm – Town  
Offices and Zoom

d) DRB – Thursday – Oct. 26, 2023 – 6:00 pm – Town Offices

11. Executive Session (Personnel, Real Estate)

**Ms. Draper made a motion to enter executive session at 7:40 pm, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

**Ms. Draper made a motion to exit executive session at 8:29 pm, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

**No actions were taken**

E. Adjournment

**Mr. White made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 pm, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted by

Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant